



Broadcasting  
Board of  
Governors

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



MBN IBB



## Who We Are

The BBG is the independent federal government agency that oversees all U.S. civilian international media. This includes the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, along with the International Broadcasting Bureau. BBG is also the name of the board that governs the agency.

BBG networks are trusted news sources, providing high-quality journalism and programming to more than 215 million people each week. They are leading channels for information about the United States as well as independent platforms for freedom of expression and free press.

**Mission:** To inform, engage and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.





ABOVE: A girl records wreckage of car bomb in Baghdad's Gorayaat neighborhood, Iraq. AP Photo/Karim Kadim

COVER: Alhurra's correspondent Hayder Alabdaly reports live from Jordan on the murder of Jordanian pilot Moath al-Kasasbeh by ISIL. MBN

INSIDE FRONT COVER: An RFE/RL Armenian Service live-streaming crew (in the center—cameraman Garik Harutyunian and journalist Anush Mkrtychian) covering an April 2014 protest by young activists opposed to a controversial pension reform plan, just as the march turned into a sit-in in front of Government House in Yerevan, Armenia. RFE/RL



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### Learn More Online

Visit our companion website for multimedia content, interactive features and additional information on all our networks: [AnnualReport2014.bbg.gov](http://AnnualReport2014.bbg.gov).

Another resource for detailed information on our strategy, goals and performance is our 2014 Performance and Accountability Report: [bbg.gov/2014PAR](http://bbg.gov/2014PAR).

A family home is placed under quarantine due to the Ebola virus in Port Loko, Sierra Leone.  
AP Photo/Michael Duff





# Letter from the Board

## ***To the President and the Congress of the United States:***

On behalf of the Broadcasting Board of Governors and pursuant to Section 305(a) of the International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-236), I am pleased to submit the BBG's annual report for 2014.

This report summarizes the activities and growing impact of the BBG, the independent federal government agency that oversees all U.S. civilian international media. This includes the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, Radio Free Asia, the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, and the International Broadcasting Bureau.

As detailed in the following pages, BBG networks play a critical role expanding freedom of information and expression and communicating America's democratic experience. BBG networks are news leaders, covering stories left untold in environments that lack press freedom and fostering civil dialogue in places bombarded with vitriol and misinformation. In 2014, BBG networks were the first international broadcasters live streaming the events from Maidan in Ukraine, led coverage on the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and continued reporting on the frontlines of the Ebola crisis.

In spite of dozens of threats to our journalists and their families along with hazardous working conditions, BBG's networks have growing impact. They nimbly responded to crises and improved understanding of the U.S. and world events as a counter-balance to extremist propaganda in countries of strategic importance to U.S. foreign policy. As trusted sources of news, they attracted a record worldwide audience of 215 million people in 61 languages.

I am proud to report the achievements of the BBG and recognize the challenges that remain ahead as we continue to fight in a crowded battleground of competing ideas. We are grateful to the Administration, Congress and the public for their support and the resources entrusted to this agency to achieve this critical mission.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jeff Shell**, Chair

**Matthew Armstrong**  
**Leon Aron**  
**Ryan Crocker**  
**Michael Kempner**

**Karen Kornbluh**  
**Kenneth Weinstein**  
**John Kerry**, *Secretary of State*,  
*ex-officio*

BBG networks are trusted news sources, providing high-quality professional journalism and programming in 61 languages. They are leading channels for information about the United States as well as independent platforms for freedom of expression and free press.

Additional examples of agency accomplishments across the globe are outlined in the pages that follow and online at [bbg.gov/2014PAR](http://bbg.gov/2014PAR).

RFE/RL Armenian Service correspondent Hovannes Movsisian covering clashes between nationalist opposition protesters and police in the Armenian capital of Yerevan, November, 2014. RFE/RL



## Overview

**By exemplifying and nurturing free media and free expression, the BBG helps foster and sustain free, democratic societies.**

BBG networks cover stories often left untold in environments that lack press freedom. Major news stories in 2014 included Russian troops in Ukraine, Boko Haram extremists in Nigeria and elsewhere, and mass protests in Hong Kong.

All BBG networks adhere to the standards and principles mandated by the International Broadcasting Act of 1994, as amended. This incorporates the VOA Charter, which was signed into law in 1976, and requires broadcasts to include accurate, reliable, objective and comprehensive news, balanced presentations of United States' institutions and policies, and information about developments throughout the world. To see the full text of principles guiding BBG news coverage, visit [bbg.gov/legislation](http://bbg.gov/legislation).

**Growing Impact**

Over the last year, the BBG networks attracted an all-time high measured audience of 215 million people each week and demonstrated growing impact. The agency examines impact across audiences, media and governments and tracks numerous indicators highlighted throughout this report.

Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty expanded live coverage of Russia and Ukraine and now reach 20 percent of all adults in Ukraine weekly.

**“Large audience gains in countries of strategic importance to the United States, combined with our successful distribution strategy, underscore that we are accomplishing our mission and skillfully utilizing our resources across difficult media environments.”**

— Jeff Shell, BBG Chairman

Radio/TV Martí launched *Reporta Cuba*, allowing citizen reporters to use mobile technology and digital media to dramatically increase the number of eyewitness news accounts directly from Cuba.

Radio Free Asia and VOA reported live on the protests from Hong Kong using a mix of satellite streaming video and social media to engage with audiences and drive the news coverage. Web traffic through the BBG's Internet Anti-Censorship proxy servers surged 60 percent.

Alhurra Television marked its 10-year anniversary and together with Radio Sawa provides an essential alternative voice across the Middle East.

**Our Worldwide Networks**

**FEDERAL NETWORKS**

**VOA** Voice of America (VOA)

**Martí** Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)

**NON-PROFIT GRANTEES**

**RFE/RL** Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)

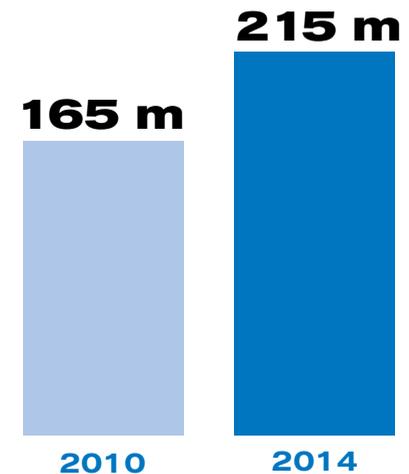
**RFA** Radio Free Asia (RFA)

**MBN** Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN)

*Supported by the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) and the Office of Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI).*

**Growth in Measured Audience**

Millions of adults, weekly



Diverse Content <b>Delivery</b>													
PLATFORM	FM	AM	SW	Satellite	Terrestrial TV	Live Streaming	On-Demand	Web	Mobile	Social Media	E-mail	SMS	DVD/Flash Drives
Audio	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■			■
Video				■	■	■	■	■	■	■			■
Text				■				■	■	■	■	■	■



## BBG's strategic goals are supported by four overarching imperatives:

- Deliver unbiased journalism and information of the highest professional standards;
- Support the development of democratic values in transitioning and closed information societies by creating open dialogue on issues not covered or discussed in domestic media;
- Counter propaganda and extremist rhetoric with credible news and information enabling audiences to positively contribute and participate in civil society; and
- Be the leading channel for information about the United States explaining U.S. policy and providing perspectives on American life and values through reporting, analysis and commentary.

## TOP 5 BBGAudiences\*

	Indonesia.....	31.4 m
	Nigeria.....	16.4 m
	Iran.....	15.6 m
	Mexico.....	14.9 m
	Afghanistan.....	9.9 m

## Weekly BBG Global Audience

215 m Unduplicated Across All Media\*

TELEVISION	RADIO	INTERNET
<b>124m</b>	<b>111m</b>	<b>25m</b>

\*In keeping with standards developed by the major western international broadcasters, BBG measures and reports unduplicated audience, meaning each individual, regardless of how many programs watched or listened to, or media platforms used, is counted only once.

Refugees in the Kakuma Camp in Kenya watch VOA's award-winning documentary "AIDS: Living in the Shadows" in the waiting area of the camp's main hospital.  
Samuel Otieno/FilmAid



Radio Free Iraq correspondent Abdelkhalig Sultan, during a visit to the camp for internally displaced people in Suruj, Turkey, which serves as the temporary home for thousands of residents of the embattled Syrian Kurdish city of Kobani, December, 2014. RFE/RL

## 61 LANGUAGES WORLDWIDE

### GLOBAL

English  
(including  
*Learning English*)

### AFRICA

Afaan Oromoo  
Amharic  
Bambara  
French  
Hausa  
Kinyarwanda  
Kirundi

Ndebele  
Portuguese  
Sango  
Shona  
Somali  
Songhai  
Swahili  
Tigrigna

### CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakh  
Kyrgyz  
Tajik  
Turkmen  
Uzbek

### EAST ASIA

Burmese  
Cantonese  
Indonesian  
Khmer  
Korean  
Lao  
Mandarin  
Thai  
Tibetan  
Uyghur  
Vietnamese

### EASTERN/ CENTRAL EUROPE

Albanian  
Bosnian  
Croatian  
Greek\*  
Macedonian  
Montenegrin  
Romanian  
to Moldova  
Serbian

\*Greek Service closed in August 2014.

### EURASIA

Armenian  
Avar  
Azerbaijani  
Bashkir  
Belarusian  
Chechen  
Circassian  
Crimean Tatar  
Georgian  
Russian  
Tatar  
Ukrainian

### LATIN AMERICA

Creole  
Spanish

### NEAR EAST/ NORTH AFRICA

Arabic  
Kurdish  
Turkish

### SOUTH ASIA

Bangla  
Dari  
Pashto  
Persian  
Urdu

## Trusted, Valued Reporting Cited by:

*New York Times*, CNN, *Washington Post*,  
*South China Morning Post*, UPI, AP, Reuters,  
BBC, *Yonhap*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Guardian*,  
Al Jazeera, AFP, Yahoo, *Korea Times*, Al Arabiya,  
*Cambodia Daily*, NPR, *Moscow Times*.

**“Alhurra’s talented team of journalists  
has provided a great service to  
the region by delivering accurate,  
unbiased news reporting, and  
giving a voice to the voiceless.”**

— Sec. John Kerry, Jan. 27, 2014

The recently developed BBG Impact Model provides a basis for setting strategy and gauging success. It examines short- and long-term impact across the networks' audience, as well as media and governments, and it evaluates U.S. international media's success at informing, engaging and connecting the audience and being influential.

The networks attracted an all-time high measured audience of 215 million people each week, including significant audiences in countries of strategic importance to U.S. foreign policy.

RFA's Khmer Service interviews a local land rights investigator in the Cambodian province of Preah Vihear in 2014. RFA's coverage of land grabs and forced evictions in Cambodia has brought attention to an issue affecting hundreds of thousands. RFA



# Growing Impact

**BBG measures impact through audience research surveys conducted by Gallup, a world-class research firm, supplemented with internally collected quantitative, qualitative and anecdotal data. The Impact Model helps advance the Administration’s focus on using data to improve government performance.**

To measure impact, the BBG examines several indicators, including:

- Weekly reach (measured audience)
- Trustworthiness
- Audience Sharing Content
- Unique, High Quality Journalism
- News Pickups
- Content Co-creation with Affiliates
- Increase Understanding of Current Events
- Help Audience Make Important Decisions



**Lilvio Fernandez Luis checks out DVD duplication equipment during a recent visit to OCB. He has been arrested for distributing Martí content in Cuba and his camera, computer and flash drives have been confiscated. OCB**

**Growing Audience: Innovative Distribution**

Strategic investments in innovative technologies and new distribution platforms helped the BBG networks grow their audience.

**Cuba**

The Martí provide sharable content on 4,000 flash drives and DVDs sent weekly to 85 distribution centers, 18 reception centers and six dubbing centers inside Cuba. Same day FTP distribution of newscasts and special programs as well as email and SMS news updates are sent to hundreds of thousands of Cubans each month. The Martí draw from the largest—if not the only—network of independent journalists on the Island. Content produced inside Cuba is then curated and airs daily across all Martí media platforms. One such program focused on the problems faced in Cuba by black *cuentalpropistas* (small business owners) and was hosted on Radio Martí by opposition figure Manuel Cuesta Morua.

**Middle East**

A new mobile application for Radio Sawa, available in Apple iTunes and Google Play stores, offers seven custom, continuous audio streams in Arabic, on-demand episodes of Radio Sawa’s most popular programs, easy access to the hourly newscast and an interactive Sawa Chat feature. Released in June 2014, it ranked in the top three for music in five countries in the Middle East and hit the top 30 rankings in more than 25 countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

**U.S. Bureau Strategy**

BBG partners with 2,500 media affiliates worldwide who bring more than half of its measured global audience.

One important placement strategy is the “U.S. Bureau” approach, which provides select, high-value partners with interactive reports from BBG network bureaus and reporters. This strategy benefits BBG networks and their media affiliates and has seen tremendous success worldwide increasing audience sizes and strengthening programming in local markets. BBG networks expanded this concept by partnering with affiliates in content and newsgathering as well as capitalizing on other learning and professional exchange opportunities.

For example, Channels TV in Nigeria puts VOA’s content into prime time on a regular basis. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), VOA and TopCongo Radio have recently formed a partnership that includes professional and content exchanges.

In Latin America, this strategy led to VOA’s audience growth of around 20 million people. VOA’s Latin America Division accounts for the most downloads on BBG Direct, the online content service for affiliates. Affiliates include Chile’s leading TV network (TV Nacional), the 24-hour Nicaraguan news channel Canal 15, Argentina’s Arter TV, TeleAmazonas in Ecuador, the Colombian news channel Cablenoticias that reaches 14 countries, and numerous radio stations in Venezuela.

## Inform: Provide Unique, High-Quality Journalism

Providing value in the media marketplace with unique reporting that is trusted and credible is one of the many ways BBG networks have impact.

### China

Throughout 2014, RFA's Uyghur Service reported on attacks and security crackdowns in China's northwestern Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) amid tensions between the mostly Muslim ethnic Uyghurs and Han Chinese. RFA also reported on the jailing and sentencing to life in prison of Beijing-based economics professor Ilham Tohti on separatism charges. In January, RFA published an interview with Tohti to be released in the event of his detention, in which he spoke as an informed, moderate critic who has never advocated Uyghur independence and said that any

confession obtained by him in custody should be viewed with suspicion. RFA has been at the forefront of breaking news from inside XUAR, garnering frequent media pickups from the *New York Times*, Associated Press, *Washington Post*, and numerous media in Asia.

In addition, VOA saw a weekly audience increase in China of over two million people. With television programs reaching audiences via satellite combined with social media engagement, VOA brought unique coverage of U.S. and world news on issues of interest to the audience, including economics, health, business, and learning English.

### Somalia

CNN, NBC, *Washington Post*, AP, Reuters, *Los Angeles Times*, ABC, *USA Today* and *New York Magazine* and others picked up VOA's exclusive interview with the

**With TV and radio programs reaching audiences via satellite combined with social media, VOA saw a weekly audience increase in China of over two million people.**

divorced parents of the Somali boy who stowed away on a flight from California to Hawaii. Journalists from many media outlets had tracked down the stowaway's father and tried to interview him. But the father refused, with one exception: he gave an interview to Mohamed Olad from VOA's Somali Service. Following up on this exclusive interview, the Somali Service got an exclusive interview with his mother in a refugee camp in eastern Ethiopia. Her account to VOA, about her son's desire to reunite with her, provided unique insights on this story that gained national and international attention.

### South Sudan

Part of growing impact is capacity building with local media organizations, particularly for places in conflict. When violence erupted in South Sudan, VOA increased its broadcasting to the region, adding 10 on-the-scene reporters in strife-torn locations around the country. VOA developed and launched a custom FM stream in Juba that carries news about South Sudan, interactive daily segments on a variety of topics, public service announcements, and other specialized news and entertainment. Meanwhile, MBN's highly acclaimed radio broadcast, *Afia Darfur*, continued providing important information and news to the Sudanese refugees and internally displaced Darfurian people. In addition, VOA conducted comprehensive technical and editorial training for reporters in South Sudan.



Ubah Mohammed Abdule, right, the mother of the 15 year old Somali boy who stowed away on a flight from California to Hawaii, is interviewed at a refugee camp in Ethiopia. AP Photo/Elias Asmare

## Engaging Key Audiences: Using Interactive Programming and Social Media

BBG networks create content that engages audiences, draws from their contributions, inspires them to share what they hear, see or read, and builds audience loyalty. All this adds up to increased impact.

### Egypt

Alhurra's flagship program *Al Youm* is a magazine-style news program that originates from Dubai, Cairo, Beirut and Jerusalem. *Al Youm* focuses on humanitarian stories that resonate with viewers, and its daily social media segment, *B.Link*, showcases the most viral stories online and incorporates viewer comments. *Al Youm*'s Facebook following has skyrocketed to 1.5 million "likes."

### Mali

A year after launching its first Bambara-language radio program for audiences in Mali, VOA has added a dynamic new call-in program *We'll Say It (Anba Fo)*. The hour-long weekly show airs on VOA's own FM station in Bamako, as well as online. Each episode addresses critical topics, such as security, education, women's rights, and youth unemployment

### Ukraine

RFE/RL traveled across Ukraine to talk to people about old family photographs as a reflection of personal and national identity in a special report entitled "My Ukraine: Memory & Identity." Ethnic Russians, Ukrainians and Hungarians were interviewed, providing RFE/RL with rich documentary evidence of the country's difficult but vibrant history. Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, and English versions of the project allowed audiences across the region to engage with the region's history while discussing its future.



An Iraqi family fleeing violence in the northern city of Tal Afar walks through the Khazer camp near the Kurdish checkpoint of Aski Kalak, 40 km from the capital of the autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq. AFP Photo/Safin Hamed

## Be Influential: Increase Understanding, Attention from Local Officials

BBG networks are influential by increasing audiences' understanding on a range of topics, including current events and U.S. policy, as well as by getting the attention of local officials on issues of importance to their communities.

### Iraq

Alhurra-Iraq focuses coverage of local and national issues that impact Iraq and the region. The daily evening program *Iraq Today* is considered by many to be the country's newscast of record. Watched by Iraqi citizens and government officials, Alhurra-Iraq's coverage of under-reported humanitarian stories has triggered

government reaction and changes. For example, while distress calls to government officials had gone unanswered, within days of an Alhurra-Iraq exposé on the deteriorating conditions at an orphanage serving as a makeshift refugee camp for the Tal Afar displaced people, members of the city council visited to see the living conditions for themselves. The members said they had not been aware of the situation until the Alhurra-Iraq report and promised to improve services, health care and living conditions for the displaced people.

Similarly, immediately after an Alhurra-Iraq report on an ongoing power outage in the village of Abu Hilala, the Northern Nasreriya Electricity Directorate fixed the problem and the village finally had electricity.

**BBG networks have demonstrable impact when they meet urgent audience needs in places in crisis. They do this by ensuring responsive, dynamic and strong local news coverage as well as U.S. and international reaction.**

**This is a strategic priority for U.S. international media. A few examples of major information surges in 2014 include responding to the spread of Russian disinformation toward Ukraine, the rise of Ebola, and the mass protests in Hong Kong.**

RFE/RL Ukrainian service correspondent Levko Stel on the front line of the conflict between pro-Russian separatists and the Ukrainian army near Debaltsero, Ukraine, September 2014. RFE/RL



# Crisis Response

**BBG networks covered stories often left untold in environments that lack press freedom. In addition, through its Internet anti-censorship (IAC) tools and programs, the BBG helped many people gain access to information in countries where it is tightly controlled.**

### Russian Misinformation

In response to the Ukraine crises, and to increasing Russian aggression in Ukraine and elsewhere, VOA and RFE/RL engaged audiences across media, with expanded programming in multiple languages.

RFE/RL reporting helped counter the growing spread of Russian misinformation. In both Russian and Ukrainian, RFE/RL began a series called *Lie of the Day*, a daily analysis of media coverage in the region. For English-language audiences, RFE/RL's *Ukraine Unspun* blog presents a clearer picture of the information war. RFE/RL reporting directly from cities in eastern Ukraine and Crimea exposed the true on-the-scene conditions.



VOA acted as the de facto “U.S. Bureau” for the Ukrainian TV market and regularly broke new ground covering U.S. policy toward the region. News programs included expert commentary and analysis regarding the Ukrainian people’s drive to integrate with the West, Russian President Putin’s determination to stop them by any means, and American and European efforts in support of Ukraine. VOA’s flagship nightly news program *Chas-Time* is seen on prime-time TV in Ukraine. In October, VOA’s Myroslava Gongadze was invited to co-moderate a series of seven parliamentary election debates on Ukraine’s First National TV.

VOA contributes special reports in prime-time broadcasts for Ukrainian affiliates including First National TV, ICTV, Channel 24, and it has doubled its TV audience since the invasion of Crimea.

Immediately after Russia’s annexation of Crimea in March, RFE/RL created a website to cover developments in Crimea in three languages. In May, VOA started a daily program, called *Studio Washington*, for Russian-speaking Ukrainians.

In October, RFE/RL and VOA launched *Current Time*—a jointly produced, 30-minute news program aimed at Russian speakers living in countries neighboring Russia. *Current Time* offers a mix of live news, interviews, original features, and political satire to television audiences and online viewers.

LEFT: RFE/RL Russian Service correspondent Mumin Shakirov interviewing civil activist Serge Sharov-Delone during the March for Freedom in Moscow, October 2014. RFE/RL

## Threats in the Region

Harassment, attempted intimidation and attacks on journalists spiked in Ukraine, and in Russia there was an increased vilification of independent media. (See page 22 for more information on threats to BBG reporters.)

RFE/RL Ukrainian Service journalists Dmytro Barkar and Ihor Iskhakov were beaten and their equipment was destroyed by members of Ukraine’s Berkut riot police in January. Three others were beaten and harassed in March while covering developments in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. Other journalists were forced to leave due to beatings by pro-Russian activists, interrogations at border points, threats linked with their reporting, and pressure to inform on events to Russian secret services.

In addition, in March, Russian authorities cut off all remaining radio transmissions by U.S. international media in Russia. In a one-sentence letter, Dmitry Kiselev, the director of the information agency Rossiya Segodnya (Russia Today), stated that “we are not going to cooperate” with the BBG’s request to continue a long-standing contract for broadcasting on Russian soil.



Vendors selling hand-washing tubs amidst Ebola outbreak, Monrovia, Liberia. VOA

## Ebola

When an Ebola outbreak in Guinea was confirmed in late March, VOA was one of the first with the story and followed it long after commercial broadcasters lost interest. VOA reporters and stringers traveled to the hardest-hit regions of West Africa and told the stories of Ebola victims, those who treat them, and those who bury them, as well as the stories of their orphaned children.

VOA reporting and online resources at [ebola.voanews.com](http://ebola.voanews.com) includes life-saving information about precautions necessary to avoid the disease as well as how to care for those who have it.

**“In its effort to spread the word about Ebola, VOA launched an unprecedented partnership with the BBC to share content.”**

— David Ensor, Director, Voice of America

VOA launched a new 24/7 programming stream on FM stations in Monrovia, Liberia and Freetown, Sierra Leone—the heart of the Ebola outbreak—that features special 15-minute Ebola updates five times a day. The program stream includes public service announcements prepared by VOA as well as the United States Centers for Disease Control and UNICEF. The broadcasts also included messages of encouragement and support from President Obama, former President Jimmy Carter and Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

In November, VOA's *Straight Talk Africa* held a town hall meeting on Ebola, presenting a wide-ranging discussion with a live studio audience and viewers online via social media.



## Hong Kong

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the demonstrations calling for universal suffrage in Hong Kong was that they were led by a group of previously unknown teenagers, a demographic many dismissed and thought to be interested only in their mobile devices, video games and themselves. In early October, when Hong Kong legislators joined forces with the student demonstrators, the pro-democracy protests captured global attention and came to be known as the Umbrella Movement.

From the start, Radio Free Asia and VOA were on the ground, reporting on the rapid developments that included the police crackdowns—first with pepper spray and later with tear gas. Then came arrests and attempts

to forcibly clear demonstration sites. At great personal risk, reporters from RFA and VOA persisted in interviewing demonstrators, the student leaders, activists, Hong Kong residents, police, officials, and business owners. The journalists also reported on the mainland Chinese perspective.

During the Hong Kong protests, VOA and RFA streamed live on the Telstar 18 satellite. They were the only source that viewers in mainland China could turn to for uncensored news as international broadcasters such as CNN and BBC were blacked out in China.

Audiences thanked RFA and VOA for being there, and for letting them know what was happening without Beijing's filter.



**TOP: Umbrella Movement demonstrators gather in Admiralty, Hong Kong. RFA**

**ABOVE: RFA interviewing Alex Chow, leader of the influential Hong Kong Federation of Students. RFA**

The global information environment has become a battleground of competing ideas.

Hostile non-state actors and extremists around the world, including ISIL, Boko Haram, Al Qaeda, and others, threaten core U.S. values of freedom and democracy and respect for human rights. These violent extremists seek to instill fear and intimidation among local populations.

An Iraqi man reacts at the site of a car bomb explosion, in the Shaab neighborhood of Baghdad, Iraq in a crowded marketplace. More than 1,200 Iraqis were killed in November by acts of terrorism by militants with the Islamic State. AP Photo/Hadi Mizban



# Countering Extremism

**According to Freedom House, fewer than 40 percent of the world's population lives in free societies—the lowest level in nearly 15 years—while only 14 percent reside in countries with a free press. The professional, factual and locally relevant journalism of the BBG networks counters extremists' lies and half-truths. BBG networks provide discussion of alternative avenues for conflict resolution and examine constructive means of addressing problems faced by these vulnerable populations. They are a mirror, not a mouthpiece, illustrating the United States' democratic process, so that countries struggling to nurture their own democratic systems might learn from the American experience.**

BBG networks' high quality, on-the-ground reporting brings news, information and alternative perspectives to regions where governments or terrorist groups spread misinformation and propaganda.

## **Syria, Iraq and Iran**

### **Providing Alternative Perspectives**

Alhurra, Alhurra-Iraq and Radio Sawa focus on voices of empowerment and tolerance to combat ISIL's messages, whether they are from the streets of Iraq or high profile government officials. Alhurra and Radio Sawa also serve as platforms for discussion and, through social media, amplify the all-important voice of moderation.

These Arabic-language networks tackle the root causes of the issues that feed into ISIL propaganda with programs highlighting examples of plurality, religious

tolerance, minority rights, and policies addressing unemployment and sectarianism. Alhurra TV's *Youth Talk* features Iraqi young adults discussing the dangers of extremism and what people can do to counter it, as well as the importance of interfaith dialogue. Radio Sawa's *Free Zone* focused on a group of 125 Muslim clerics and leaders who show how Islam differs from the propagandist interpretation ISIL uses to recruit new members.

### **Ramping Up Coverage**

Since the first reports of ISIL emerged, Alhurra and Radio Sawa have provided daily updates on the terrorist organization's tactics, advances, funding and potential threats, as well as comprehensive coverage of regional and international response. The networks have also engaged audiences in understanding their own role in combatting extremism. In Alhurra-Iraq's *Youth Talk*, young Iraqi adults discussed the causes for the insurgency and what young people can do to combat it. Another Alhurra-Iraq program, *In Iraqi*, examined ISIL's use of media and how journalists can provide important information without becoming a mouthpiece for either ISIL or the Iraqi government.

With ISIL intensifying its drive toward Baghdad, Radio Sawa began to air six and a half hours of RFE/RL's Radio Free Iraq (RFI) programming on its



## **Witnessing the Human Impact**

**When ISIL militants attacked a group of ethnic Yazidi, some of the trapped Yazidi used dying cell phones to reach VOA Kurdish Service reporter Dakhil Elias. He heard the cries of a woman being held prisoner by ISIL in a school. She begged for help, telling him that the militants were “dragging girls by force” and demanding they convert to Islam. Recounting the human impact of ISIL's violence is one of the ways BBG networks serve as a counterweight to ISIL's messages of intolerance.**

**ABOVE:** VOA Kurdish anchor Dakhil Elias listens to audience members who call into the *Kurd Connection* program. VOA

**LEFT:** Radio Sawa correspondent Bahaa El Neaimy interviewing a displaced woman in Iraq. MBN



The abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls from Chibok in April 2014 sparked wide outrage against Boko Haram. Shown here is a protest against the group by hundreds of teachers in Maiduguri. VOA/Ibrahim Ahmed



AM stream into Iraq, offering audiences more access to RFI reporting from hotspots such as Mosul, Ramadi, Kirkuk, Baquba, Dohuk, and Irbil. RFI also expanded its live morning radio show to 90 minutes in March, as violence escalated in Syria and Iraq's Anbar Province.

In October, RFE/RL launched *Under The Black Flag*, a blog featuring detailed, authoritative news and analysis on ISIL and its terror campaign in Iraq and Syria. The blog aggregates reporting produced by RFE/RL services to create an uncensored picture of ISIL-related developments.

VOA Kurdish moved aggressively to provide targeted content in Kurdish on television, digital and social media. The VOA weekly program *Kurdish Connection* is now broadcast on affiliate station Naliya TV (NRT), the first non-partisan news channel in Kurdistan. Being on a popular channel in an ideal time slot enables VOA Kurdish to reach many more viewers with news and information on U.S. policies and perspectives on this critical region.

#### **A Window on Muslim Life in America**

VOA Persian partnered with 10 leading U.S. universities, including Stanford, Princeton, Harvard, Yale, and UCLA, to launch a new multimedia project introducing audiences in Iran to the history, research and student life at these institutions. VOA showcased these universities' research on Iran in a series of TV documentaries and online. VOA also increased efforts to fight religious extremism and dispel misconceptions about the United States by producing a series of TV interviews and special reports on interfaith initiatives in U.S. religious communities.

#### **Afghanistan**

U.S. international media play a vital role in supporting the struggle against terrorism and the development of democratic institutions. VOA serves as a professional, trusted media platform providing U.S. and world news,

analysis of U.S. policy, and perspectives on U.S.-Afghan relations. RFE/RL's Radio Azadi provides fair and objective journalism, and in a media environment dominated by powerful individuals or interest groups, serves as a bridge between common people and the government.

RFE/RL joined with state broadcaster RTA to sponsor and moderate two presidential candidate debates on February 15 and 16 in Kabul. On June 14, the day of Afghanistan's presidential runoff election, RFE/RL provided 12 hours of live coverage, maintained live blogs in Dari and Pashto, and actively posted content on social media.

VOA also provided extensive election coverage, including an interview with outgoing President Hamid Karzai, and reports on voters defying Taliban threats to cast their ballots. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry sat down with VOA's Afghan Service for an interview that ran on Dari- and Pashto-language radio as well as on Afghan state television.

To promote social inclusion and counter the tendency of male dominated voices in most Afghan programs, VOA launched *Najiba Noshaba*, a show which would only take calls from women. Not a single woman called in its first weeks, so when men called, hosts began to say, "Please pass the phone to your wife!" Now shows are drawing floods of calls from women in once-improbable places in the Taliban's southern heartland, including Uruzgan, Khost, and Helmand.

## Nigeria and Somalia

With large measured audiences in Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Cameroon and Burkina Faso reached via radio, video, Web and mobile audio streaming platforms, VOA has been the world leader in reporting about Boko Haram's reign of terror.



People call on the Nigerian government to rescue girls taken from a secondary school in Chibok region, in the city of Abuja, Nigeria. AP Photo/Olamikan Gbemiga

## Boko Haram

In early 2014, a VOA Hausa reporter went where few reporters have gone, to Boko Haram territory in northern Nigeria, and filed stories showing how a once peaceful land has been transformed into a land of killing fields. Extensive video, photos and interviews were published in VOA's special report, "In the Home of Peace, A Siege of Fear," showing the everyday horror of life for millions of Nigerians.

## Chibok Kidnapping

VOA was a leader in covering the story of the kidnapping of the Chibok school girls in northern Nigeria by Boko Haram. In mid-April, weeks before other Western reporters, VOA's Dakar correspondent, Anne Look, filed a story on the kidnapping, and VOA stayed with the story when other news organizations had moved on. VOA exposed Boko Haram's tactics of posing as soldiers to trick the girls, their intent to sell them into slavery, and the efforts of the United States

and others to help in the rescue. VOA interviews with girls who managed to escape brought vivid details of their harrowing experience to a global audience. In October, the Hausa Service was first with the news that the Nigerian government was in talks with Boko Haram to establish a ceasefire and discuss the release of the kidnapped schoolgirls.

## Al-Shabaab

VOA Somali continues to be a reliable source of information in the troubled Horn of Africa region, where more than 40 percent of adults cite VOA as one of their top three information sources and more than half the population listens to VOA weekly. VOA's Nairobi bureau chief was embedded with Somali and African Union troops during operations against al-Shabaab militants and filed compelling reports for VOA television. VOA Somali conducted two town hall meetings this past year—one in Mogadishu on child soldiers and the other in Hargeisa on human trafficking.

The BBG operates in countries where authoritarian governments, struggling to control both information and their citizens, seek to censor objective voices and crack down on civil society, including independent press.

The following outlines a few egregious examples among dozens of instances where our reporters and their families faced harassment, attempted intimidation, and violence in the course of their reporting.

Additional stories can be found at [AnnualReport2014.bbg.gov/ThreatsAgainstJournalists](http://AnnualReport2014.bbg.gov/ThreatsAgainstJournalists).

Investigative journalist and RFE/RL contributor Khadija Ismayilova, being interviewed by Obyektiv TV outside Baku's train station after being summoned to appear before Azerbaijani prosecutors on February 18, 2014. RFE/RL/Abbas Atilay



# Threats Against Journalists

## Azerbaijan

On December 26, RFE/RL's Baku Bureau was raided by police and investigators, who seized documents and official stamps and sealed the bureau to prevent further journalistic work. More than two dozen bureau employees were questioned by prosecutors without benefit of legal representation or explanation of any charges.

This move followed an escalation of government interference with RFE/RL reporting in 2014. Beginning in February, Azerbaijani contributors **Khadija Ismayilova** and **Yafez Hasanov** were harassed and accused of espionage. In the following months, the harassment of Ismayilova intensified, culminating in Ismayilova being jailed on politically motivated charges in December.

## China

Along with ongoing online censorship, jamming and prohibitions on reporting and broadcasting in country, Chinese authorities have engaged in a sustained pattern of harassment against the family of Radio Free Asia Uyghur reporter **Shohret Hoshur** in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. His three brothers have been detained, and one of the brothers has been sentenced to prison for five years. Shohret is a U.S. citizen who has been targeted in the past for his breaking and exclusive news coverage for RFA on the unrest and tensions in Xinjiang.

## Cuba

Contributors to the Martí's citizen journalism initiative "Reporta Cuba" have faced numerous instances of harassment and threats. In July, Cuban authorities violently arrested several citizen journalists and confiscated their recording equipment along with DVDs containing TV Martí programming. There have been more than a dozen of similar incidents in the past year, meant to intimidate reporters and citizen journalists and prevent the spread of non-state information.

## Iraq

Iraq continues to be a dangerous place for journalists. Tragically, on March 22, while on his way to work, RFE/RL Baghdad Bureau Chief **Dr. Mohammed Bdaiwi Owaid Al-Shammari** was shot and killed at a security checkpoint as he entered the Iraqi presidential compound, where the bureau is located. The shooter in the case has been tried and convicted for murder.

Alhurra-Iraq's **Omar Al Obaidi** and his cameraman were traveling through Iraq's Anbar province to report on Iraqi military activity, when they were attacked by ISIL militia. The militia fired rifles into the air, smashed the video camera, and kicked and slapped Omar and his cameraman. Omar and his cameraman were able to get away after the Iraqi police arrived, but a member of ISIL fired a rifle and struck the car. Fortunately, the two men suffered only minor injuries.

## South Sudan

VOA journalists in South Sudan have been subjected to harassment and threats from government officials amid a battle for control of the country between forces loyal to the President and those loyal to the Vice President. In March, a VOA journalist was picked up from his office in Juba by government security officers and brought to South Sudan's Deputy Director for National Security. He was held for more than five hours and questioned. With the help of the U.S. Embassy in Juba, the journalist was released unharmed. On the same day, another VOA journalist was detained by security forces in the city of Wau and a different VOA journalist left the country out of fear of harassment. In August, a VOA journalist was forced into hiding because government authorities harassed him over his reporting on rebel activities.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Radio Free Asia Uyghur reporter, **Shohret Hoshur**; Cuban citizen reporter **Augustín López**; RFE/RL Baghdad Bureau Chief **Dr. Mohammed Bdaiwi Owaid Al-Shammari**; Alhurra TV's **Bashar Fahmi**.

## Syria

Alhurra TV's **Bashar Fahmi** has been missing since August 20, 2012. Fahmi was reporting from Aleppo, Syria, when he disappeared and has not been seen or heard from since. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Syria is one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists.



Mothers of the missing Chibok school girls abducted by Boko Haram Islamists gather to receive information from officials. AFP Photo/STR



Voice of America

**Budget:** \$201.6 million in FY 2014  
**Employees:** 1,115 employees  
**Languages:** 45 (see list on page 26)  
**Mobile Apps:** available in 43 versions Apple iOS and Android  
**Online:** voanews.com  
@VOAnews

# Voice of America

**With a weekly audience of nearly 172 million people, VOA is a trusted source of news and information in 45 languages for audiences in more than 100 countries. VOA's global network of reporters and its firm commitment to sound journalistic principles give it a platform to engage audiences in discussions about events around the world.**

Through innovative TV programming and diverse delivery platforms, VOA is attracting new audiences in competitive markets such as China, Indonesia, Iran, and Latin America. Content on mobile devices and through social media grew exponentially in the past year along with direct-to-home satellite and targeted FM streams. VOA maintains its role as a shortwave broadcaster in information-deprived markets such as North Korea and Tibet.

## Africa

### Ebola

VOA reporters traveled to the hardest-hit regions of West Africa to tell the stories of Ebola victims and joined with BBC in a groundbreaking partnership sharing content on the outbreak. *To learn more about this Crisis Coverage, see page 16.*

### Nigeria

VOA continues to distinguish itself as a go-to source of news on Boko Haram and the regional implications of its campaign of violence. *To learn more about this Countering Extremism coverage, see page 21.*

### Somalia

With the international community backing regional efforts to defeat al-Shabaab, more than half of Somalis each week get their news from VOA. The weekly VOA Somali television show *Qubanaha (Variety)* airs on Universal TV and Somali National Television with a

mix of U.S., international, and regional news as well as reports from journalists inside Somalia. *To learn more about VOA's impact there, see page 21.*

## East Asia

### China

VOA News ranks first among measured non-Chinese news apps, and its Mandarin-language social media platforms inside China are helping build new audiences, 75 percent of which are below the age of 35. Those larger audiences got important news they couldn't get from official Chinese media, including comprehensive coverage of the protests that rocked Hong Kong in September and October. In the first three weeks of the protests, VOA Chinese produced 102 videos on YouTube, that got more than 851,000 views.

### Burma/Myanmar

VOA's Burmese Service chief Than Lwin Htun traveled to Myanmar's capital Naypyitaw in November and scored four exclusive interviews that made headlines inside and outside the country. Lwin's interview with President Thein Sein about constitutional reforms and ethnic issues ran on MRTV, SkyNet, and Myanmar National TV. Other interviews included the speaker of parliament, Thura Shwe Mann, opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and the first-ever media interview with Burma's Military Chief of Staff, Sr. Gen. Min Aung Hlaing. Three weeks after Lwin asked the president about greater media access,

the government in Naypyitaw announced the start of weekly press briefings.

## Thailand

When the Thai military suspended radio and TV broadcasts as part of its May coup, VOA Thai launched a daily, live 30-minute satellite radio-on-TV and webcast while ramping-up social media outreach on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

## Eurasia

### Ukraine

Throughout 2014, VOA dramatically increased its programming to Ukraine, doubling its audience with new television affiliates and reporting from both sides of the conflict now reaching more than 18 percent of adults weekly. *Read more in Crisis Response page 15.*

### Russia

Denied program placement on Russian media, VOA's Russian Service employed a digital-first strategy to connect with audiences across desktop, mobile and social platforms. VOA provided the Russian Business Channel (RBC), a Moscow-based business television station that reaches 11 percent of adults every week, with daily financial reports from the New York Stock Exchange on the global economy and the effects of President Putin's financial and foreign policies.

## Latin America

When violence between Venezuelan protestors and security forces killed more than 40 people, President Nicolas Maduro clamped down on reporting of the violence, blaming the United States for plotting a fascist coup. VOA broke through that censorship with balanced reporting from Washington and Caracas on leading networks in Colombia, Nicaragua, Argentina,

# BROADCASTING IN 100+ COUNTRIES

- Press Not Free
- Press Partly Free
- Press Free
- Not a VOA Audience



\* Greece service closed 2014

## South Asia: Pakistan

When Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani teenager who survived a Taliban assassination attempt, was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize, more than 300 news organizations sought an interview. She granted only seven—including VOA Urdu. The seven-minute interview, conducted immediately before she went onstage to accept the Peace Prize, was distributed across Pakistan, including to the state-owned PTV, the Pakistan Television Corporation, and to VOA's worldwide audience. At the award ceremony in Oslo, she requested a song written and performed by VOA Deewa Service poet Sardar Ali. "Bibi Shereena" or "Adorable Lady" salutes the importance of women's education.

## 45 LANGUAGES

- GLOBAL**  
English (including Learning English)
- AFRICA**  
Afaan Oromoo  
Amharic  
Bambara  
French  
Hausa  
Kinyarwanda  
Kirundi  
Ndebele  
Portuguese  
Sango  
Shona  
Somali  
Songhai  
Swahili  
Tigrigna
- Central Asia**  
Uzbek
- EAST ASIA**  
Burmese  
Cantonese  
Indonesian  
Khmer  
Korean  
Lao  
Mandarin  
Thai  
Tibetan  
Vietnamese
- EASTERN/ CENTRAL EUROPE**  
Albanian  
Bosnian  
Greek\*  
Macedonian  
Serbian
- EURASIA**  
Armenian  
Azerbaijani  
Georgian  
Russian  
Ukrainian
- LATIN AMERICA**  
Creole  
Spanish
- NEAR EAST/ NORTH AFRICA**  
Kurdish  
Turkish
- SOUTH ASIA**  
Bangla  
Dari  
Pashto  
Persian  
Urdu

\*Greek service closed in August 2014

## Latin America *continued*

Ecuador and Peru—all of which are seen inside Venezuela—and with Internet censorship circumvention tools to thwart online suppression of the news.

VOA coverage of the crisis surrounding unaccompanied minors from Central America crossing the southern U.S. border included reports from the White House and Capitol Hill, correspondent interviews with regional affiliates, and reports from the region.

Sarajevo-based journalist Marija Arnavotic (with sunglasses on her head), covering the violent “Bosnian Spring” protests, February, 2014. RFE/RL



Radio Free Europe/  
Radio Liberty

**Budget:** \$95.3 million in FY 2014  
**Employees:** 503 employees  
**Languages:** 28 (see full list on page 29)  
**Mobile Apps:** available in 25 versions Apple iOS and Android  
**Online:** [rferl.org](http://rferl.org)  
@rferl

# Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

**RFE/RL has an audience of 23.3 million people in 28 languages in 21 countries, including Ukraine, Russia, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. RFE/RL journalists provide what many people cannot get locally—uncensored local and regional news, responsible discussion, and open debate.**

Headquartered in Prague with 19 bureaus across its broadcast region, RFE/RL's proximity to its audiences facilitates audience engagement, real-time coverage and production of unique, relevant, and locally-oriented programming. RFE/RL is funded through, and operates under, a grant agreement with the BBG.

In March, Vice President of Finance John Giambalvo and Editor-in-Chief for Programming Nenad Pejic were

appointed Interim Managers of RFE/RL following the resignation of RFE/RL President Kevin Klose.

In a year when political turbulence, terrorism and popular demands for reform dominated headlines, RFE/RL's surrogate media services brought the values of independent journalism to millions. RFE/RL offers its audiences the rich, immediate, and interactive content they seek, using the latest digital technologies and



**Radio Mashaal correspondent Umar Daraz Wazir, reporting on the plight of displaced persons in the Pakistani tribal region from the Ghuriwala food distribution point, Bannu District, Pakistan October, 2014. RFE/RL**

trusted broadcast radio to reach people in some of the most closed and also some of the least developed countries on earth.

## Azerbaijan

On July 15, the Azerbaijani Service posted a joint investigation with the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) into alleged links between two of President Ilham Aliyev's daughters and two of Azerbaijan's largest mobile phone providers, indicating that members of the president's family may control nearly three-quarters of the country's mobile market.

## Balkans

Visits to the RFE/RL Balkan Service's website more than doubled in February, as a result of the coverage of violent protests in Bosnia and Kosovo. RFE/RL also served as a vital source for news about the floods that ravaged Bosnia and Serbia in May, with daily stories about the situation in the flood zone along with videos and photo galleries of the devastation.

## Georgia

In April, the Georgian Service (Radio Tavisupleba) expanded its programming from eight to 18 hours daily on longtime FM affiliate Radio Green Wave. Content for the expanded stream is produced by RFE/RL's Georgian, Russian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani Services, as well as VOA's Georgian and Learning English services and its music network, VOA1-The Hits.

## Iran

Radio Farda sent a correspondent to Vienna in February, May and November to provide exclusive, live, first-hand, and around-the-clock Persian-language coverage for its audience in Iran of the nuclear talks between Iran and the P5+1 countries.



Moldovan Service journalist Liliana Barbarosie, in RFE/RL's Chisinau Bureau. RFE/RL

### Moldova

In June, RFE/RL's Moldovan Service partnered with public Radio Moldova to debut a new, monthly Russian-language roundtable show to counter Russian propaganda. Another program, *The Weekend With Europa Libera*, is also being broadcast twice each week by Moldovan Public Radio, once in Romanian, once in Russian. In November, RFE/RL launched a daily, 10-minute television program, *Clear and Simple (Pur si Simplu)*, in Romanian and in Russian.

**“Through your radio, I ask the militants to stop the violence and create an environment to avoid your children being harmed. So, cooperate with us to root out these diseases from our land. I ask all people to wage Jihad against polio.”**

– Religious scholar Maulana Mufti Fazal Manan, appealing to local elders via Radio Mashaal in a region where vaccination teams are targeted by religious extremists.



## BROADCASTING IN 28 COUNTRIES

- Press Not Free
- Press Partly Free
- Press Free
- Not an RFE/RL Audience

### Pakistan

A Radio Mashaal report convinced Pakistani authorities to begin repairs in January on a vital, but long-disused irrigation canal in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province along the border with South Waziristan. In September, Radio Mashaal reporting on the closure of schools in the Pakistani tribal areas spurred government action to reopen them and allow tens of thousands of children to continue their studies.

### Russia

In January, RFE/RL published a dramatic multimedia, multilingual project, “Sochi 2014: Outside the Arena” that looked at the environmental, social and human costs associated with the Sochi Winter Games.

## 28 LANGUAGES

### CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakh  
Kyrgyz  
Tajik  
Turkmen  
Uzbek

### EURASIA

Armenian  
Avar  
Azerbaijani  
Bashkir  
Belarusian  
Chechen  
Circassian  
Crimean Tatar  
Georgian  
Russian  
Tatar  
Ukrainian

### NEAR EAST/ NORTH AFRICA

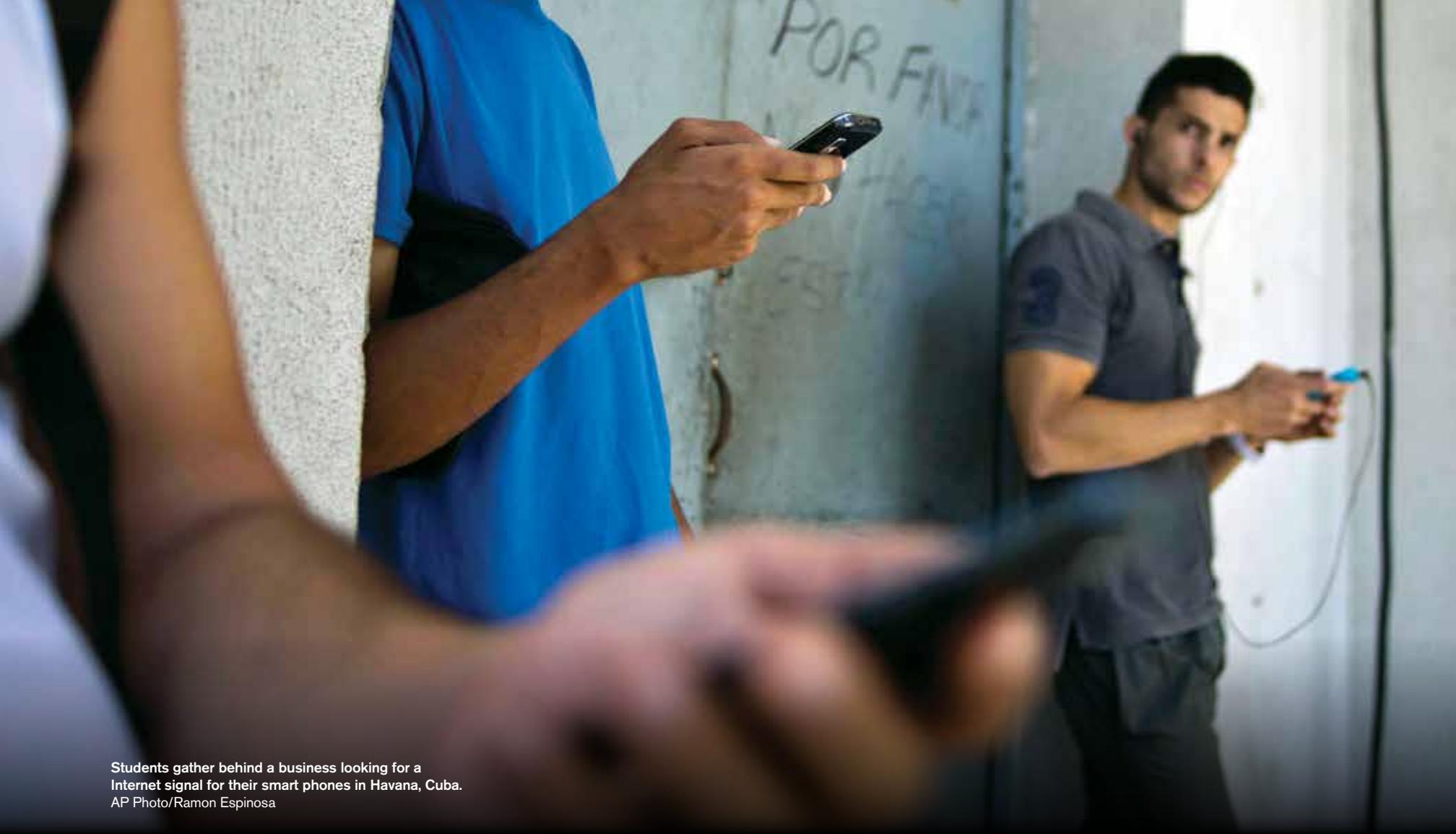
Arabic to Iraq

### SOUTH ASIA

Dari  
Pashto  
Persian

### EASTERN/ CENTRAL EUROPE

Albanian to Kosovo  
Bosnian  
Croatian  
Macedonian  
Montenegrin  
Romanian to Moldova  
Serbian



Students gather behind a business looking for a  
Internet signal for their smart phones in Havana, Cuba.  
AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa



## Office of Cuba Broadcasting

<b>Budget:</b>	\$26.6 million in FY 2014
<b>Employees:</b>	125 employees
<b>Languages:</b>	One, Spanish
<b>Mobile Apps:</b>	available in Spanish Apple iOS and Android
<b>Online:</b>	<a href="http://martinoticias.com">martinoticias.com</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/martinoticias">@martinoticias</a>

# Office of Cuba Broadcasting

**OCB is a multimedia hub of news, information and analysis that provides the Cuban people unbiased, objective information. Despite continuous jamming efforts by the Cuban government, Radio and TV Martí and martinoticias.com connect with audiences through a combination of high and low-tech approaches—satellite television, satellite radio, shortwave and AM radio, the Internet, flash drives, DVDs, and more.**

OCB covers Cuba with the largest network of independent journalists on the island. Launched in 2014, the Martí's *Reporta Cuba* is a social media platform that collects and amplifies content with news from the island from dozens of citizen reporters. Cubans learn to use available tools to communicate about their lives and experiences without censorship or ideological constraints.

The Martí's communicate with hundreds of thousands of Cubans each month through targeted emails, SMS and Piramideo, an online network free of government control that connects people across the island.

## Covering Immigration

In 2014, a record number of Cubans entered the United States across the Mexican border, reflecting the growing trend of Cubans traveling to Central and South America and then towards the U.S. There was also a record increase in *balseros* (rafters). Martí coverage started in Cuba from the point of the origin of the crisis, with exclusive access to witnesses and family members of rafters lost at sea. Martí crews traveled to Panama and the Bahamas following key stories, and through collaborations with local media in Ecuador, Mexico, Guatemala, and Costa Rica,



gathered first-hand testimonials and other exclusive reports.

The Martí's launched an awareness campaign about the dangers of illegal immigration that included radio and television public service announcements. An online information page was built and heavily promoted to provide users with an at-a-glance resource on U.S. immigration policies.

## Game Changer

On December 17, 2014, the United States and Cuban governments jointly announced the beginning of efforts to normalize relations between the two countries. While Cuban government channels did not broadcast President Barack Obama's speech, the Martí's broadcast it live with simultaneous translation for the people of Cuba.

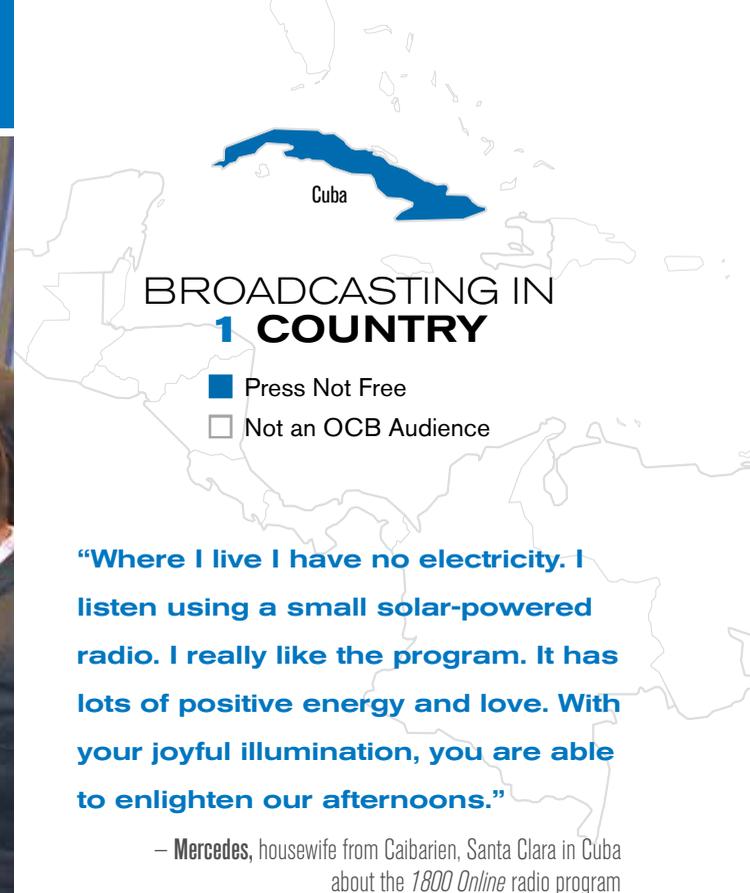
The Martí's had up-to-the-minute reports on every angle of this historic decision, with comments from U.S. government officials, Raul Castro's statements, comments across the political spectrum applauding and questioning the measure, and reactions from the island, including leaders of the Cuban opposition, human rights activists and people-on-the-street. The Martí's filled a critical information gap with explanation and analysis of the new policy and the ramifications for Cubans.

For 30 years the Martí's have been a trusted voice that informed Cubans of happenings in their own country and the world. Now, more than ever, they play a pivotal role accurately informing Cuban audiences.



ABOVE: TV Martí coverage of release from Cuba of American Alan Gross, December 2014. OCB

TOP RIGHT: TV Martí reporter Anna Herrero reports from Venezuela during the student demonstrations and subsequent government crackdown, March 2014. OCB



### MORE OCB 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Providing High Quality Local Reporting on Topics Important to Cubans
- Highlighting Cubans' Struggle for Free Press and Free Expression
- Increasing News Coverage Based on Audience Interest
- Breaking News About Health Crisis
- Connecting and Engaging Cubans via Innovative Anti-Censorship Strategies

LEFT: Journalists, guests and crew prepare for the August taping of *Avanza Cuba (Cuba Forward)* during which panelists debated the U.S. Embargo on Cuba. OCB



RFA Khmer Service reports on garment workers marching in Veng Sreng Street, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, January, 2014. RFA



## Radio Free Asia

**Budget:** \$48.4 million in FY 2014  
**Employees:** 240 employees  
**Languages:** 9 (see list on page 35)  
**Mobile Apps:** available in 12 versions on Apple iOS and Android  
**Online:** rfa.org  
@RadioFreeAsia

# Radio Free Asia

**RFA reaches its target audiences in nine languages in six countries: China, North Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, providing them with uncensored, fact-based local news. Through online video, television, satellite, social media networks, and digital content, in addition to shortwave and AM radio broadcasts, RFA delivers unique, professional journalism and a wide range of voices, opinions and perspectives from within Asia.**

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., RFA has seven overseas bureaus and an extensive network of correspondents. Call-in programs, multimedia reports, and interactive websites offer audiences an open forum in which they can freely express views and ideas. RFA is funded through, and operates under, a grant agreement with the BBG.

Following strict journalistic standards of objectivity, integrity, and balance, RFA also serves as a model for its target countries' emerging journalistic traditions. RFA's reports are frequently cited in reports in *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, Reuters, Associated Press, Agence France Presse, Chosun Ilbo, NHK, Al Jazeera, Ming Pao, and BBC, among numerous other domestic and international outlets.

## Cambodia

RFA's Khmer Service closely covered labor disputes as tens of thousands of garment workers began striking in late 2013 and throughout 2014 for higher wages and safer working conditions. The police violently quelled several of the workers' demonstrations. RFA has reported on the unions representing the workers calls for better labor conditions and fair hearings in the country's courts.

## China

RFA's Tibetan Service covered Chinese authorities' bid to tighten controls on the Tibetan Buddhist monastic community by constructing a police station and detention center near a Buddhist monastery in Sichuan, jailing monks who called for the return of the Dalai Lama, and expelling hundreds unregistered nuns at a convent close to the Nepalese border. The service also reported on the continuing self-immolation protests against Beijing's rule.

RFA's Mandarin Service reported on the crackdown on unofficial churches in China's Henan and Zhejiang provinces where authorities have detained congregants, charged pastors and torn down crosses following raids on houses of Christian worship.

In addition, the Cantonese Service has covered the increasingly restrictive press environment in Hong Kong, including the arrests, assaults, and harassment of journalists.

## Uyghurs

The Uyghur Service reported on attacks and security crackdowns in China's northwest Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region amid tensions between the mostly Muslim ethnic Uyghurs and Han Chinese residents. Coverage included the sentencing to life in prison of economics professor Ilham Tohti for separatism charges.



ABOVE: RFA reporter Hee Jung Yang interviewing Park Sang-hak, the chairman of Fighters for a Free North Korea at Hackathon event organized by The Human Rights Foundation in San Francisco in August, 2014. RFA

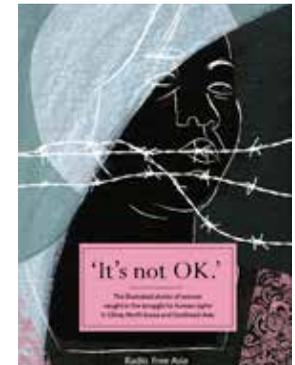
## North Korea

Through sources inside the country and on the Chinese border, RFA reported on North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's crackdown on high-ranking officials, demotions of military personnel, reopening of prison camps, and political persecution of those considered loyal to potential rivals. In 2014, the government banned the ownership of Chinese mobile devices, further cutting the flow of outside information into the country.

## Human Rights and Press Freedom

In December, RFA, in collaboration with BBG's Office of Digital and Design Innovation, produced a multimedia

e-book and companion website profiling the lives, work, and sacrifice of women living under authoritarian rule. *'It's not OK'* is a collection of portraits of remarkable women and their fight for human rights in China, North Korea and Southeast Asia.



Declines in press freedom were seen across the broadcast region. RFA closely covered criminal lawsuits against newspapers, the jailing of editors and reporters, and the killing of a journalist being held by the military in Burma (Myanmar). Reporting on the ongoing crackdown on bloggers and the government-imposed restrictions in Vietnam, RFA documented the harassment, arrests, trials, and sentencing of netizens who expressed views deemed politically sensitive. At the time of publication, 27 bloggers were jailed there, according to media watchdog group Reporters Without Borders, making Vietnam the world's second biggest jailer of netizens.

In May, RFA co-sponsored the visit of six prominent Vietnamese bloggers who briefed members of the U.S. House of Representatives about Vietnam's online environment, attended meetings with technologists and human rights advocates, and participated in a panel discussion at RFA in commemoration of World Press Freedom Day.

### Hong Kong

RFA and VOA were on the scene to document the rapid developments in the demonstrations that became known as the Umbrella Movement in which Hong Kong residents called for universal suffrage. *See page 17 for details.*



## BROADCASTING IN 6 COUNTRIES

- Press Not Free
- Not an RFA Audience

### 9 LANGUAGES

#### EAST ASIA

Burmese  
Cantonese  
Khmer  
Korean

#### LAO

Mandarin  
Tibetan  
Uyghur  
Vietnamese



**“Chinese authorities completely block the news about Hong Kong Occupy Central Movement. I learn about the Hong Kong news mainly from the satellite TV and Radio Free Asia.”**

— Caller from Guangxi, October 29, 2014

LEFT: Vietnamese bloggers display signs demanding government transparency in a “We Want to Know” campaign, September 2014. RFA

Alhurra's correspondent Hayder Alabdaly provides live reports from the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. MBN



# MBN

Middle East  
Broadcasting Networks

**Budget:** \$106.2 million in FY 2014  
**Employees:** 792 employees  
**Language:** One, Arabic  
**Mobile Apps:** available in Arabic on Apple iOS and Android  
**Online:** alhurra.com  
radiosawa.com  
@alhurranews  
@radiosawa

# Middle East Broadcasting Networks

**MBN is an Arabic-language news organization with an audience of 29 million people in 22 countries in the Middle East and North Africa, all of which Freedom House deemed “not free” or “partly free” in 2014. MBN networks support democratic values by expanding the spectrum of ideas, opinions and perspectives in the region and by fostering direct communication between the United States and important audiences in the region.**

## Driving News Coverage

MBN brands include Alhurra Television, Alhurra-Iraq Television, Radio Sawa, and Afia Darfur along with Alhurra.com and RadioSawa.com. With contributions from reporters on-the-ground, MBN produces programming at its headquarters in Northern Virginia, and in Washington, D.C., Baghdad, Dubai, Beirut, Cairo and Jerusalem. MBN is funded through, and operates under, a grant agreement with the BBG.

Alhurra and Radio Sawa are regularly cited in the Arabic press, increasing the impact of the networks' unique brand of objective and accurate news. For example, Radio Sawa's interview with the Kuwaiti Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs on Iran's role in fighting

ISIL was quoted by Alwasat, Al Nahar, and Kuwait News. Alhurra's interview with the Libyan Prime Minister was quoted in scores of media outlets including Yahoo Maktoob, Al Arab, Akhbar Libya, Al Ahram, and Al Youm.

## Engaging Audiences

MBN also provides original reporting and interactive posts on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, as well as integrating social media within on-air broadcasts. In this way, MBN is broadening the conversation on issues such as free speech, freedom of religion and human rights.

## Alhurra

Alhurra (The Free One) provides primarily news and information programming, hosting discussion programs that examine political and social issues of interest to the audience in the Middle East and airing viewpoints not often discussed freely in the region. To provide a comprehensive view of U.S. foreign policy and a better understanding of the American people and the U.S. system of governance, Alhurra has correspondents at the State Department, the White House, Congress and the Pentagon and frequently airs interviews with U.S.

LEFT: Alhurra correspondent Faten Elwan, second from left, covers a demonstration outside of Ramallah, November 2014. MBN

**“No one should hurt people in the name of religion.”**

– Comment on Alhurra's Facebook page

officials as well as experts from American think tanks. Alhurra's popular *Al Youm (Today)*, is a live three-hour daily news magazine that originates simultaneously from five countries in three continents.

## Alhurra-Iraq

MBN has an Iraq-specific channel providing local news, discussion and cultural programs to an Iraqi audience. Alhurra-Iraq TV is affecting change in the daily lives of Iraqis. *Learn more in Growing Impact on page 13.*

**In 2014, both Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq celebrated their 10th anniversary.**

## Radio Sawa

Airing on FM and AM across the region with eight distinct streams, Radio Sawa is the most popular radio network in the region. It attracts young audiences by playing contemporary Arabic and Western music along with news and in-depth current affairs programs such as *Sawa Magazine*, *Free Zone* and *Ask the World Now*.

## Afia Darfur

MBN also broadcasts a daily 30-minute news and information program on shortwave radio to the Darfurian refugees and internally displaced people. Afia Darfur provides localized news and analysis on the day-to-day issues facing audiences in Sudan and Eastern Chad.





Cast and crew members from MBN Alhurra's *Our Neighborhood*. MBN

## Egypt

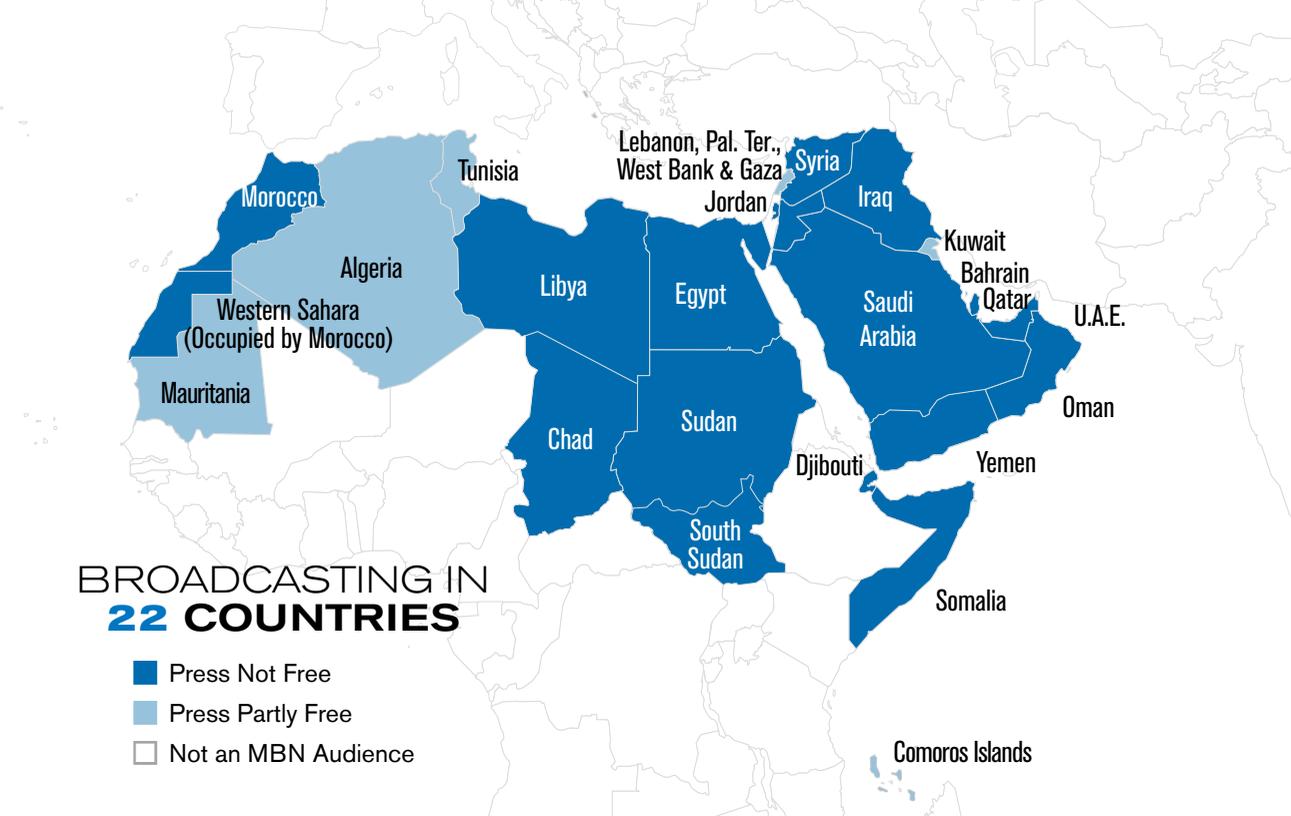
In 2014, Alhurra launched a new program, *Our Neighborhood*, that follows inhabitants of different neighborhoods within Cairo, as they share their lives with viewers; both their challenges and the triumphs. The unscripted documentary delves into the stories of the people it profiles and shows how they interact with their neighborhood while striving to achieve a personal ambition.

**“Officials listen to Afia Darfur...it is important for the people and refugees in Darfur. I thank you for Afia Darfur which brought world attention to our concerns.”**

– Mohamed Ahmed Minnawi, Darfur Parliament

## BROADCASTING IN 22 COUNTRIES

- Press Not Free
- Press Partly Free
- Not an MBN Audience



## An Alternate Voice to ISIL

MBN's networks provide accurate and objective news and information including in Iraq and Syria which are at the heart of the ISIL crisis. MBN's team of courageous professionals are actively reporting on the devastating impact of the extremist group and measures to counter it.

Stories resonate with audiences as made clear through the networks' online engagement. Nearly 150,000 users read or shared an item on ISIL funding. A piece about ISIL recruiting people through the Internet solicited nearly 1,000 Facebook comments. See *Countering Extremism* on page 19.

## MORE MBN 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Directly Communicating America's Policies and Actions
- Engaging Audiences on Social Issues with Original and Compelling Content
- Informing Those Electing New Leaders through Coverage of Elections in Region, including:
  - Egyptian Vote on New Constitution
  - Egyptian Presidential Election
  - Algerian Presidential Election
  - Bahraini Parliamentary Election
  - Tunisian Presidential Election



IBB Tinang station technicians Maxie Aquino and Perfecto Sanchez finalize installation of ASIASAT 3 receiving equipment at FM affiliate DXSS-FM in Davao, Mindanao, Philippines. BBG

# IBB

International Broadcasting  
Bureau (IBB)

Office of Technology,  
Services & Innovation (TSI)

**IBB Budget:** \$65.5 million in FY 2014

**IBB Employees:** 213 employees

**TSI Budget:** \$178 million in FY 2014

**TSI Employees:** 409 employees

**The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) is responsible for BBG's strategic planning, conducting audience research and performance measurement, administrative services, as well as innovation strategy, transmissions, marketing and affiliate program placement. The Office of Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI) manages the technical and infrastructure functions of the agency, including delivering content for all BBG networks.**

### **International Broadcasting Bureau**

IBB plays an essential role in developing strategy and partnership building in key markets as well as the business operations of the federal components. IBB leads integration activities between the federal and grantee networks for greater organizational efficiency. It manages the agency's communications, financial operations, legal services, human resources, security and the day-to-day implementation of the Board's strategy. And, IBB is rapidly transforming and growing the impact of U.S. international media through innovative content delivery for the BBG.

### **Affiliate Strategy**

IBB's Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) has grown a successful strategy that places high-quality

interactive reports on local affiliate radio and television stations. This strategy, as described on page 11, has been especially effective in Latin America, where audiences grew by 20 million, and is being expanded to include newsgathering activities and professional exchanges.

### **Mobile Engagement and Digital Innovations**

Direct is a platform developed by IBB for affiliates and digital partners to access video and audio content from all five networks. With BBG Direct, the online content service, affiliates have a streamlined, cost-effective and customizable way to receive broadcast-quality programming to distribute on-air and online to local audiences.

The IBB team, in partnership with MBN, released a new mobile application in June for Radio Sawa.

The Sawa app, which is available in Apple iTunes and Google Play stores, offers seven custom, continuous audio streams in Arabic, on-demand episodes of Sawa's most popular programs, easy access to the hourly newscast and an interactive Sawa Chat feature that allows listeners to respond to questions on relevant community issues. It ranked in the top three for music in Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan, Mauritania and Yemen, and hit the top 30 rankings in more than 25 countries in the Middle East and North Africa region.

### **Workforce Support and Development**

To enhance employee professional and personal growth, IBB established the Office of Workplace Support and Development (OWSD) that consolidates agency training and employee assistance resources to boost human capital. IBB negotiated an improved telework policy and secured remote access procedures to allow increased opportunities for employees to work remotely.

### **Office of Technology, Services & Innovation**

TSI oversees and manages a broad array of technical functions and agency infrastructure, including IT support. TSI distributes BBG networks' content in the most effective and efficient way to audiences in more than 100 countries. In addition to traditional radio and television transmissions, TSI maintains, operates and supports multiple delivery platforms including a satellite network, Internet capability and mobile devices.



LEFT: IBB Enterprise Telecommunications Team. L-R: Evelyn McKinnon; Peter Vaselopulos; Douglas Schuette; Ajamu Patterson. BBG

In 2014 TSI installed a new FM transmitter for Radio Sawa broadcasts in Nouakchott, Mauritania; upgraded the FM signal in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; and replaced the FM transmitter in Ajloun, Jordan. In addition, TSI, in collaboration with VOA, launched two automated program streams using an advanced music software scheduling system: a 24/7 mobile feed in Hausa for VOA's *Dandalin* program, and a 24/7 English FM feed for audiences in South Sudan. TSI engineers also completed a project to restore and upgrade 14 VOA FM affiliates in Haiti.

A combination of repairs, upgrades and new transmission techniques have produced exceptional operating results at transmitting stations.

#### Anti-Censorship Activities

In FY 2014, TSI's Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) team countered online censorship in 13 countries and supported 21 BBG language services. The team led the way in the battle against satellite jamming, working closely with other international broadcasters, the Department of State, non-governmental organizations, satellite operators and industry groups. The IAC team expanded use of a mobile application for audiences in Iran. The Android-based app incorporates a social news reader, accepts user-generated content and provides a real-time chat functionality.

Half of the BBG's funding for Internet freedom goes to RFA's Open Technology Fund (OTF), which supports projects that advance inclusive and safe access to global communication networks.

In 2014, OTF funded innovative efforts for Internet freedom with projects ranging in scale and focus. Programs include avenues to improve access to the Internet, to support awareness of privacy and security threats, to enhance privacy, and to improve security from online threats.

Learn more at [opentechfund.org](http://opentechfund.org).

#### GLOBAL BBG DISTRIBUTION

**4,100** hours  
original programming each week

**2,500** affiliates

**197** transmitters

**97** transmitting sites

**14** satellites

**6** marketing offices

**5** networks

#### MORE IBB 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Promoting Organizational Agility and Cost-Effectiveness
- New Contracting Staff Strategy
- Acquisitions Policy and Procurement Process Reviews
- Journalist Training
- Expanding Reach in Sahel
- Measuring and Reporting on Performance
- Audience Research
- Comprehensive Analytics Platform

#### MORE TSI FY 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Expanding and Upgrading the Agency's Content Production and Distribution System
- Modernizing Information Technology and Communication Tools
- Countering Internet Censorship and Jamming of Broadcast Signals



iStock.com/Kevin Landwer-Johan

#### Combating Satellite Jamming

As part of the U.S. delegation to the World Radio Communication Conference, BBG successfully lobbied for a proposal calling on member states to "take the necessary steps" to end jamming. BBG and other broadcasters further pressed the International Telecommunication Union for standards in geolocating the sources of harmful interference. BBG also worked closely with EUTELSAT, the agency's primary satellite carrier for reaching Iranian audiences, to make jamming by the Tehran government more difficult.

# AWARDS 2014

BBG journalists, producers and other staff were honored with numerous professional awards from around the world. More information is available at [bbg.gov/2014awards](http://bbg.gov/2014awards).

## BBG

### 2014 BURKE AWARDS

Every year the BBG presents the David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards to recognize courage, integrity and professionalism of journalists working for U.S. international media.

- VOA ..... Idriss Fall, French-to-Africa Service  
Anne Look, VOA Central News  
Bagassi Koura, French-to-Africa Service
- RFE/RL ..... Ukrainian Service, Kyiv Bureau
- OCB ..... Rolando Rodriguez Lobaina, independent journalist
- RFA ..... Moe Thu Aung, Myanmar Service
- MBN ..... Maitham Al-Shibani, Alhurra-Iraq  
Omar Adnan Al-Obaidi, Alhurra-Iraq

## INTERNET

### ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING AWARDS

- Online Factual (Finalist)  
RFE/RL ..... *Sochi: Outside the Arena*

### COMMUNICATOR AWARDS

- Online Video-Documentary (Silver Award)  
RFE/RL ..... Russian Service, Olga Loginova (Silver)  
*Raising Julia*
- Online Video-Other  
RFE/RL ..... Belarus Service & Multimedia Unit (Silver)  
*Oswald in Minsk*

### THE LOVIE AWARDS

- Internet Video/Events & Live Broadcast (Bronze Award and "People's Lovie")  
RFE/RL ..... Ukrainian Service  
*Bird's-Eye View of 'Euromaidan' Protests in Kyiv*

### WEBBY AWARDS

- Websites / Radio and Podcasts (Official Honoree)  
RFE/RL

## MOBILE

### WEBBY AWARDS

- Mobile and Apps / News: Handheld Devices (Official Honoree)  
RFE/RL

### MEFFY AWARDS

- Best Mobile Service (Finalist)  
VOA, ODDI\* ..... *Mobile News App*  
\*Office of Digital and Design Innovation

## RADIO

### COMMUNICATOR AWARDS

- On Air Talent/ Radio Personality (Gold and Silver)  
RFE/RL ..... Radio Farda, Farshid Manafi  
*Pas Farda*
- Programs- On Air Talent/ Humor (Silver Award)  
RFE/RL ..... Radio Farda, Farshid Manafi  
*Pas Farda*
- Programs - Writing/ Creative Concept (Silver Award)  
RFE/RL ..... Balkan Service, Milos Teodorovic  
*Gaf nedelje*

### PUBLIC ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS PRIZE

- Best Radio Correspondent  
RFE/RL ..... Jenish Aidarov  
*Reporting on the Kyrgyz-Tajik and Kyrgyz-Uzbek border crises*

### UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM [UNDP], THE ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS OF KOSOVO (AJK) AND THE KOSOVO ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY (KAA) AWARDS

- Best Radio Story  
RFE/RL ..... Balkan Service, Nadie Ahmeti  
*Investigation into misconduct by elected officials in the Lipjan municipality*

## NEW YORK FESTIVALS INTERNATIONAL RADIO AWARDS

- Best Coverage of a Breaking News Story  
MBN ..... Radio Sawa (Gold)  
*Coverage of Egyptian Clashes*
- Best Investigative Reporting (Bronze)  
RFA ..... Cantonese Service  
*Born in the USA: Instant Citizenship in Saipan*
- Environment & Ecology (Finalist)  
RFA ..... *Poisoned at the Source: China's Food Production Up Close*
- Best News Documentary or Special (Finalist)  
RFA ..... Lao Service  
*Waiting for Sombath Somphone*
- Best Human Interest Story (Finalist)  
RFA ..... Jinseo Lee  
*The Promise of Freedom: Across History and Continents*
- Best Special Report (Finalist)  
RFE/RL ..... Radio Farda, Mahtab Vahidi Rad  
*The Execution Game*
- Travel & Tourism (Finalist)  
VOA ..... Learning English  
*This Is America*

## ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTERS (AIB) AWARDS

- Radio Current Affairs Documentary (Highly Commended)  
MBN ..... Radio Sawa  
*Report on Syrian refugees*
- Radio Investigative Documentary (Finalist)  
MBN ..... Radio Sawa  
*Report on human trafficking*
- Radio Live Journalism (Finalist)  
MBN ..... Radio Sawa  
*Report on Egyptian clashes*

## GRACIE AWARD FROM THE ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MEDIA FOUNDATION

Outstanding Investigative Program or Feature

RFA.....Cantonese Service  
*Born in the USA: Instant Citizenship in Saipan*

## PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY/ PROMOS

### CINE GOLDEN EAGLE AWARD

Best Commercials and Promotions

MBN.....Alhurra  
*Egypt in Crisis*

### EMMY AWARDS BY THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF TELEVISION ARTS AND SCIENCES, SUNCOAST CHAPTER

Promotion and Commercials (Nomination)

OCB.....TV Martí, Fabián Pérez-Crespo  
*Grandes Historias*

OCB.....TV Martí, Fabián Pérez-Crespo  
*Piramideo*

## TELEVISION

### EMMY AWARDS BY THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF TELEVISION ARTS AND SCIENCES SUNCOAST CHAPTER

Interview/Discussion

OCB.....TV Martí, Janet Lomba, Tatiana Riquelme (Nomination)  
*La Nueva Cuba de Guillermo Fariñas*

OCB.....TV Martí, Isabel Cuervo (Nomination)  
*Lilo Vilaplana: Arte y Disidencia*

### CINE SPECIAL JURY AWARD

Best Investigative Report

MBN.....Alhurra  
*Street Pulse*

## ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTERS (AIB) AWARDS

Short Documentary (Finalist)

MBN.....Al Youm  
*Mother/daughter reunion*

Short News Report (Finalist)

MBN.....Alhurra  
*Egyptian clashes*

Short Documentary (Finalist)

VOA.....Julie Taboh/Adam Greenbaum  
*Prisoner-Turned-Farrier*

Short News Report (Finalist)

VOA.....Patrick Wells  
*Ukraine Donetsk Airport*

## NEW YORK FESTIVALS INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION AND FILM AWARDS

News: Reports/Features (Bronze World Medal)

VOA.....*Fire in the Land of Snow: Self-Immolations in Tibet*

Human Interest News Report (Finalist)

VOA.....Julie Taboh/Adam Greenbaum  
*Animal Sanctuary*

Best Camerawork (Finalist)

MBN.....Alhurra  
*Coverage of Capitol Hill Car Chase*

Community Portraits Documentary (Finalist)

MBN.....Alhurra  
*Stories with Akram Khuzam*

National/International Affairs Documentary (Finalist)

MBN.....Alhurra  
*Egyptian Democracy*

Social Issues Documentary (Finalist)

MBN.....Alhurra  
*Street Pulse*

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA JOURNALISM AWARDS FROM THE LA PRESS CLUB

International Journalism (First Place)

VOA.....Mike O'Sullivan  
*US Tourist Towns Assess Shutdown Damage*

## RELIGION NEWSWRITERS ASSOCIATION (RNA) AWARDS

National Network/Cable News Religion Report of the Year

VOA.....Jerome Socolovsky  
*Nigerian Christians in Texas*

## SPECIAL NOTE

### ROMANIA'S "ORDER OF FAITHFUL SERVICE" BY PRESIDENT TRAIAN BĂSESCU

RFE/RL.....Moldovan Service Director Dana Serafim and two former Romanian Service journalists

## INDEPENDENT AZERBAIJANI UNION OF JOURNALISTS

Zardabi Award

RFE/RL.....Arifa Kazimova, Azerbaijani Service

## DELEGATION OF EUROPEAN UNION TO GEORGIA

Special Prize for Peace Journalism

RFE/RL.....Goga Aptsiauri  
*Pain and Hope from Sarajevo*

Best Blog Report

RFE/RL.....Lasha Bughadze  
*Be Lysistratas*

## BELARUSIAN ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS ALLIANCE

Best Human Rights Journalist of the Year

RFE/RL.....Alena Pankratava, Belarus Service  
*Liberty in Prisons*

# Broadcasting Board of Governors

The Broadcasting Board of Governors is the independent federal agency that oversees all U.S. civilian international media, and it is the name of the board that governs the agency.

In 2014 the Board's Special Committee on the Creation of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of U.S. International Media completed its work of selecting and appointing a CEO and director. This has been a key objective of the BBG and the Administration, and supported by the Office of Inspector General, to improve management and efficiency of BBG operations and to mitigate the challenges of a part-time board.

Respected journalist and media executive Andrew Lack served as the first-ever CEO and director of the agency from January to March 2015. In March, BBG's Director of Global Operations André Mendes was named Interim CEO and Director upon Lack's unforeseen return to NBC News.

The Board's Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Radio Broadcasting conducted a comprehensive review of the efficacy of shortwave radio as a distribution platform. Taking an audience-first approach, the Committee, which was chaired by Governor Matt Armstrong, issued its report in August,

"To Be Where the Audience Is: The Future of Shortwave."

The Board meets regularly throughout the year to discuss the agency's performance, review agency policies and provide strategic direction. A new board meeting structure includes an in-depth look at each BBG network and a series of panel discussions to provide platforms for discussion and innovation. These panels covered topics from perceptions of the United States throughout the Middle East, democracy in Latin America, and digital storytelling techniques as a means of engaging audiences in rapidly changing media environments.

Special guest panelists throughout the year included Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications and Speechwriting, Ben Rhodes; journalist and producer Soledad O'Brien; Washington Bureau Chief for Al Arabiya News, Hisham Melhem; Washington Bureau Chief for Al-Jazeera International, Abderrahim Foukara; documentary filmmaker Morgan Spurlock, marketing executive Frank Cooper III, and media executives Ben Silverman, Charlie Corwin and Howard Thomas Owens.

Board meetings and related documents are available for viewing online, [bbg.gov/boardmeetings](http://bbg.gov/boardmeetings).



BBG Storytelling Panel October, 2014 with Ben Silverman, Frank Cooper III, Morgan Spurlock, Soledad O'Brien, Charlie Corwin, Howard Thomas Owens.

The Board is bi-partisan and composed of nine members with expertise in the fields of mass communications, broadcast media, or international affairs. Eight members are appointment by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The ninth, the Secretary of State, serves *ex officio*.

## Governors serving in 2014



### Jeff Shell, Chairman

Jeff Shell is chairman of Universal Filmed Entertainment.

He previously served as chairman of NBC Universal International from 2011-2013 and as president of Comcast Programming Group from

2005 to 2011. Prior to joining Comcast, Shell held a number of positions, including CEO of Gemstar TV Guide International and President of the FOX Cable Networks Group. As president of the FOX Cable Networks, he oversaw the operations of FOX's entertainment and sports cable programming businesses. He currently serves on the board of the National Constitution Center. Shell earned a B.S. in Economics and Applied Mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley and an M.B.A. from Harvard University.

Shell is the chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors and chairs the BBG's Advisory Committee and Special Committee on the Creation of a CEO of U.S. International Media. He also chairs the boards of directors for the BBG's grantee networks.

He has served as Chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors since August 2013.



### Matthew Armstrong

Matthew C. Armstrong is an author, speaker, and strategist on issues related to public diplomacy.

In 2011, he served as executive director of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. Previously, Armstrong was an adjunct professor of public diplomacy at the Annenberg School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Southern California. In 2010, he founded and

served as President of the MountainRunner Institute and published a blog on public diplomacy and strategic communication. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Public Diplomacy Council, a member of the International Institute of Strategic Studies and the National Press Club. Armstrong earned a B.A. and an M.P.D. from the University of Southern California.

Armstrong chairs the Special Committee on Voice of America in the 21st Century and is a member of the Advisory Committee, the Special Committee on Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) and the Special Committee on the Creation of a CEO of U.S. International Media. He also served as the chair of the Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Radio Broadcasting.

He has served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors since August 2013.



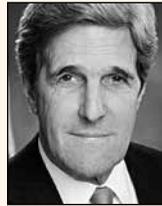
#### **Ryan Crocker**

Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker is dean of the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University—a position from which he had taken a leave of absence to serve as U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan from 2011 to 2012.

Crocker is also the James Schlesinger Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Virginia. Prior to resuming his position as dean, Ambassador Crocker was a Kissinger Senior Fellow at Yale University. His 37-year career in the Foreign Service included service as U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Kuwait, and Lebanon. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Board of Trustees of Whitman College. Ambassador Crocker is a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Presidential Distinguished Service Award, the Secretary of State's Distinguished Service Award, and the Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Civilian Service. He earned a B.A. from Whitman College.

Crocker served on the Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Radio Broadcasting and the Special Committee on IAC.

He has served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors since August 2013.



#### **John Kerry**

On February 1, 2013, John Forbes Kerry became the 68th Secretary of State of the United States.

Previously, Mr. Kerry served 28 years in the United States Senate, with the last four as Chairman of the Senate

Foreign Relations Committee.

As a senator Mr. Kerry was a leader on key foreign policy and national security issues facing the United States, including nuclear nonproliferation and global climate change. Prior to chairing the committee, Mr. Kerry chaired the Asia and Middle East subcommittees where he authored and passed major legislation on international drug trafficking, international money laundering, humanitarian aid, and climate change, and he helped negotiate the agreement establishing the United Nations tribunal to prosecute war crimes in Cambodia.

Mr. Kerry is represented on the Board by Richard Stengel, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.



#### **Kenneth Weinstein**

Kenneth Weinstein has been President and CEO of Hudson Institute since 2011. Since joining Hudson Institute in 1999, he has held several other positions, including Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Senior Fellow, and Director of the Washington Office. From 1996 to 1998,

he was the Director of the Government Reform Project at the Heritage Foundation, and from 1994 to 1996, he was Director of Research at the New Citizenship Project. He served on the National Council of the Humanities from 2006 to 2012 and was appointed to the D.C. Advisory Board to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in 2010. Weinstein received a B.A. from the University of Chicago, an M.Phil. from the Institut d' Études Politiques de Paris, and a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

Weinstein serves as a member of the Advisory Committee and Special Committee on the Creation of a CEO of U.S. International Media. He chairs the Special Committee on IAC, and also served on the Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Radio Broadcasting.

He has served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors since September 2013.



TOP: BBG Governors Karen Kornbluh and Kenneth Weinstein, December 2014 Board meeting. BBG

LEFT: Michael Meehan, August 2014 Board meeting. BBG

RIGHT: BBG Governor Ryan Crocker, February 2014 Board meeting at MBN headquarters. MBN



**TOP: BBG Chairman Jeff Shell presents an award in recognition of Alhurra's 10th Anniversary at the Middle East Broadcasting Networks. MBN**

**BOTTOM: Under Secretary of State Richard Stengel, IBB Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble, and RFE/RL Co-CEO Nenad Pejic at RFE/RL's HQ, Prague. RFE/RL**



**Susan McCue**

Susan McCue is President of Message Global, a strategic advocacy firm she founded in 2008 for social action campaigns.

McCue was the founding President and CEO of The ONE Campaign to combat extreme global poverty and was Chief of Staff to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid from 1999 to 2007. Before that she held numerous communications positions in government and campaigns.

She has served as the Vice Chair of Humanity United and as member of the Council on Foreign Relations. A New Jersey native, McCue is a graduate of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J., with degrees in economics and journalism.

McCue served on numerous BBG committees, including most recently as a member of the Special Committee on the Creation of a CEO of International Media.

McCue served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors from July 2010 until May 2014.



**Michael Meehan**

After 23 years of work in the U.S. Congress, congressional and presidential campaigns, Meehan for the past six years has built a successful communications strategy and public relations firm, VennSquared Communications. As president and CEO, Meehan's firm provides strategic communications for dozens of Fortune 500 companies, foundations, trade associations and political and issue campaigns. On Capitol Hill, Meehan has served in senior roles for U.S. Senators John Kerry, Barbara Boxer, Maria Cantwell and former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, and Congressman Vic Fazio and John Olver.

Meehan has served on numerous BBG committees, including the Advisory Committee and the Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Radio Broadcasting.

Meehan has served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors since July 2010. His appointment to the Board ended on December 29, when Karen Kombluh was sworn-in to succeed him.

## Newly Appointed Governors in 2014

In late 2014, three new members joined the Board.



### Dr. Leon Aron

Dr. Leon Aron is Resident Scholar and Director of Russian Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, a position he has held since 1993. He was a weekly Contributor at the Voice of America's Russian language radio and television show *Gliadya iz Ameriki* (*Looking from America*) from 1990 to 2004. Dr. Aron was previously an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University from 1994 to 1996 and a Senior Policy Analyst at the Heritage Foundation from 1987 to 1992. He was awarded the Peace Fellowship from the U.S. Institute of Peace from 1992 to 1993. Dr. Aron received a B.A. from Moscow State Pedagogical Institute and an M.A. and a Ph.D. from Columbia University.

He has served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors since December 2014.



### Michael W. Kempner

Michael W. Kempner is the Founder, President, and CEO of MWW, a public relations firm he founded in 1986. He is board member of Goodwill Industries International and a Founding Board Member of ConnectOne Bancorp. He served on the White House Council for Community Solutions from 2010 to 2012. In 2013, he was named Agency Leader of the Year by PR News, Executive of the Year by American Business Awards, and Agency Professional of the Year and Communications Professional of the Year by Bulldog Stars of PR. Mr. Kempner received a B.S. from American University.

He has served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors since December 2014.



### Karen Kornbluh

Ambassador Karen Kornbluh is the Executive Vice President of External Affairs for Nielsen, responsible for global public policy, privacy strategy, and corporate social responsibility. Prior to joining Nielsen, Kornbluh was the U.S. Ambassador to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) from 2009 -2012. Previously, she was Policy Director for then Senator Barack Obama. In the Clinton Administration, she served as Deputy Chief of Staff at the U.S. Department of Treasury and Director of the Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Federal Communications Commission. Additionally, Kornbluh founded the New America Foundation's Work and Family Program and is a senior fellow for Digital Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. She has a bachelor's degree from Bryn Mawr College and a Master of Public Policy degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

She has served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors since December 2014.



BBG Chairman Jeff Shell presents the David Burke Awards during a special ceremony in December 2014. BBG



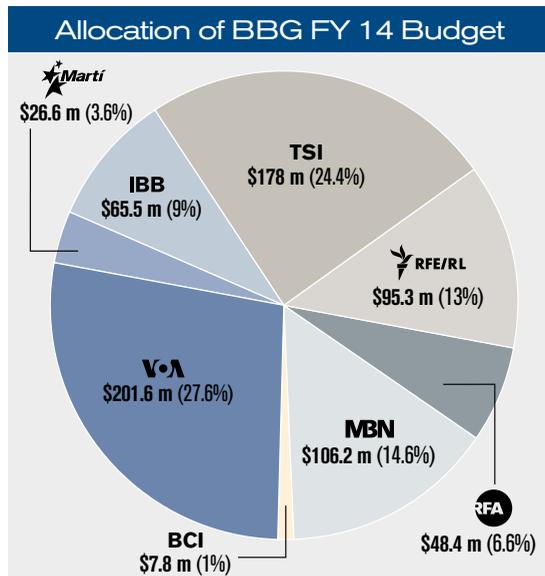
BBG Governor Matthew Armstrong in Ukraine with then-RFE/RL President Kevin Klose, January 2014. RFE/RL

# Financial Highlights

The independent accounting firm, Kearney & Company, conducted our FY 2014 financial statement audit and issued an unmodified opinion on our Principal Financial Statements.

Preparing these statements allows the BBG to improve financial management and provide accurate and reliable information to Congress, the President, and the taxpayer. BBG management is responsible for the integrity and objectivity of the financial information presented in the statements.

The financial statements and financial data presented in this report have been prepared from the accounting records of the BBG in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles and incorporate the application of the standards as prescribed by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board.



(IN THOUSANDS)	2014	2013
<b>AT END OF THE YEAR</b>		
<b>Condensed Balance Sheet Data</b>		
Fund Balance with Treasury	\$ 191,082	\$ 161,420
Accounts Receivable	226	112
Advances to Surrogate Broadcasters	55,000	45,576
Property, Plant and Equipment	116,411	118,407
Other	6,324	10,982
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 369,043</b>	<b>\$ 336,497</b>
Accounts Payable and Other	\$ 42,038	\$ 38,815
Retirement and Payroll	40,713	35,665
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 82,751</b>	<b>\$ 74,480</b>
Unexpended Appropriations	\$ 196,694	\$ 162,659
Cumulative Results of Operations	89,598	99,358
<b>TOTAL NET POSITION</b>	<b>\$ 286,292</b>	<b>\$ 262,017</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Position</b>	<b>\$ 369,043</b>	<b>\$ 336,497</b>

(IN THOUSANDS)	2014	2013
<b>FOR THE YEAR</b>		
Total Cost	\$ 728,831	\$ 743,355
Total Earned Revenue	(3,426)	(3,646)
<b>Total Net Cost of Operations</b>	<b>\$ 725,405</b>	<b>\$ 739,709</b>





Broadcasting  
Board of  
Governors



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